

**LAWYER'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES
MARCH 4, 2003
JAMESBURG, NEW JERSEY**

Chairperson Linda Schwimmer opened the meeting with Judges Lyons and Steckroth in attendance. Absentees included: Bruce Buechler, Bruce Levitt, Carlton Lewis, Warren Martin, and Frank Vecchione.

The minutes from the meeting of September 26, 2002 were adopted.

Committee Reports:

Ongoing Oversight of Local Rules- The LAC approved proposed changes to D.N.J.LBR 1019-1, 9013-1, and 9072-1. These, along with the minor changes approved at the last meeting will be submitted to the Board of Judges. Joseph Casello noted that all of these proposals will be subject to the new local rule change procedures which are stated on the website.

Local Chapter 11 Rules Committee - Judge Steckroth reported that the Chapter 11 Committee had developed four general orders adopting guidelines to improve the administration of Chapter 11 cases in NJ. Guidelines, rather than rules and procedures were adopted so as to afford the maximum judicial discretion in their application. It is hoped that these guidelines, if adopted by the Court, will dispel any notion that NJ is a hostile environment for Chapter 11 cases. The four proposed general orders will be considered at the Judge's Meeting on March 20th. Judge Steckroth expressed his appreciation for the hard work of the committee.

Chapter 13 Rules Committee - John Morton presented a revised proposed Local Form 16A for clearer vehicle loan/lease post-petition payment history. The LAC approved the proposed form for submission to the Board of Judges. Leonard Wizmur proposed a standard order dismissing/converting Chapter 13 cases to standardize the practice of the 4 standing trustees. The LAC approved the proposed order subject to review of the trustees. Linda Schwimmer reported that the committee is working on a standard order approving Chapter 13 sales, and a standard order for prospective relief and waiver of the 10 day stay.

Clerk's Report: Jim Waldron reported that the AOUSC still had not provided a budget for the court for fiscal year 2003, but all forecasts are bleak. Staffing is likely to be reduced in 2003 and again in 2004 which makes the use of electronic filing all the more important. The court is now receiving only about 14% of the documents via e-filing which is much lower than neighboring Delaware, Manhattan, and Brooklyn. The court is now using version 2.1 which has many enhancements. Jim reported that the Bench Bar Conference on April 4th will include a plenary session on e-filing. He plans to recommend to the Board of Judges that consideration be given to making e-filing mandatory for attorneys as it is in many other districts. **After some discussion the LAC voted to recommend making it mandatory.**

New Business: Reminder that use of the new Chapter 13 plan is effective on April 1st.

Anyone interested in helping expand the Inn of Courts into Southern NJ should contact Judge Wizmur or Arthur Abramowitz.

Dan Stolz reported that there will be a Bankruptcy Section dinner in November to honor the 10th anniversaries of both Judges Burns and Ferguson. The Section is pursuing change of venue issues (v. Sen. Biden) and has recommended that the Board of Trustees lobby against the pending legislation.

The next Judge's Meeting is scheduled for March 20th.

The next LAC meeting is scheduled for May 21, 2003, location tba.